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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004961

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2015

TAGS: PREL MOPS IZ

SUBJECT: LEADING IRAQI SUNNI ARAB SLATE CALLS ON INSURGENTS
TO CEASE ATTACKS DURING THE ELECTION

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) A
ND (D).

11. (C) Ambassador Khalilzad and General Casey convened selected Sunni Arab leaders December 11 to discuss concrete steps each side could take in support of the December 15 elections (see septel). After this meeting, the Iraqi National Dialogue Council, which is a major group within the leading Sunni Arab slate ("Tawafoq" or Accord), issued a statement (text below) December 12 calling on the insurgents to cease military operations for five days beginning December 13. The statement also calls on MNF-I and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to cease military operations. The statement was delivered by Khalaf al-Ulayyan, a former military officer from al-Anbar province who is likely to be a political leader of Tawafoq in the new Iraqi legislature. Al-Ulayyan participated in the December 11 meeting with Ambassador Khalilzad and General Casey.

12. (C) Comment: The National Dialogue Council, whose leaders include Sunni Arab Islamists and tribal figures, still calls the insurgency an "honorable resistance" fought by "mujahideen."

They have never before issued a statement like this. We are not sure yet how much impact it will have. Its appearance on Sharqiya TV means it will get a big audience. A Sunni Arab journalist told PolCouns 12/12 that the insurgency's hard-core elements are Baathists who don't listen to Islamists. Even if the impact is not immediate, we do have a major Sunni Arab group now urging an end to fighting, at least temporarily, so that they can better exploit opportunities in the political process here. That is a positive message for us.

13. (U) Following is the text of a report that appeared on Iraq's al-Sharqiyah television December 12:

The Iraq National Dialogue Council has called for halting the military operations in some Iraqi cities and villages, as well as the raid and arrest operations in order to calm the situation as a prelude to holding the elections under secure and stable conditions. In a statement read out by its secretary general Khalaf al-Ulayyan today, the council appealed to whom it called gunmen to stop their acts to achieve this goal.

(Begin al-Ulayyan recording) In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate;

But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah for He is One that heareth and knoweth (all things) (Koranic verse)

As the date set for the parliamentary elections is approaching, and in order to guarantee an effective participation by all sectors of the Iraqi people in the elections, we call on the occupation forces and the Iraqi Government to stop the military operations in flashpoint governorates in general and halt the raid, arrest, and physical liquidation operations. We also call for the release of prisoners in government jails and the abolition of the decree stipulating that the governorates of Al-Anbar and Ninawa are emergency areas.

We also call on the zealous, auspicious Iraqis, who dedicated themselves to defending their religion, homeland, and honor for the sake of God, to stop the jihadist operations against the occupation forces and their allied forces for five days, starting 13 December 2005. This is in order for them to prove to the entire world that they have a message and are seeking rights, and that they are neither rabble-rousers nor terrorists as they are described by the occupiers and their agents.

This is also in order for them to prove to their people that it is they who defend their rights and care about their interests. To prove this, they should respond to the people's wish to participate effectively in the elections and preserve their security and safety and the safety of the international observers tasked with monitoring the voting process. We hope that the religious authorities and political entities will support us in this demand in order to avoid sedition. Praise be to God.

(Signed) The Iraqi National Dialogue Council -- The Iraqi
Al-Tawafuq (accord) Front.

(Dated) 10 Dhu Al-Qi'dah 1426 Hegira, corresponding to 12
December 2005. (end recording) (Vide of Al-Ulayyan reading
the statement out)
KHALILZAD